

# COVID-19 Daily Update

June 7, 2020

## Summary

The United States has 1,928,594 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 110,047 reported related deaths. Dr. Fauci stated that the U.S. outbreak appears to be trending in “the right direction” despite a few “blips.” WHO issued updated guidance on mask-wearing. WHO encouraged the public to wear face coverings where there is “widespread transmission and physical distancing is difficult”; those at a high risk of severe COVID-19 should wear medical-grade masks. Fabric masks should consist of at least three different layers of material. President Trump signed the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020 on Friday, June 5. The Act provides greater flexibility to small businesses using federal loans under the Paycheck Protection Program to pay for payroll, employee benefits, and other expenses. Early data from a clinical study published by National Institutes of Health (NIH) suggest that off-label use of the cancer drug acalabrutinib may provide clinical benefit to patients with severe COVID-19.

Health officials expressed concern over the potential spread of COVID-19 during protests against racial injustice. New York City issued guidance on how to protest safely during the pandemic. The City recommends that protesters wear face coverings, assume that they have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested five days after exposure, and avoid contact with anyone at a greater risk for severe COVID-19. British scientists halted a large trial on the use of hydroxychloroquine to treat COVID-19 after initial results showed no evidence of benefit. Chinese officials released a lengthy report, which defended the government’s actions and asserted that the country provided information on the pandemic in a timely and transparent manner. Casinos in Las Vegas re-opened last week with protective measures including barriers between slot machines and restrictions on the number of people allowed at card tables and bars.

New York reported 45 deaths on Sunday, June 7. Approximately one percent of the 60,435 diagnostic tests conducted in New York on Saturday, June 6 were positive. New York will allow outdoor, socially distanced graduations with up to 150 people, beginning on June 26. Places of worship will be permitted to resume operations at 25% occupancy during phase two of a region’s re-opening. Governor Cuomo issued an executive order allowing commercial buildings to conduct temperature checks of anyone entering the building. New York City Department of Health published a tool that employers can use to screen employees for COVID-19 symptoms before entering the workplace. The City is expected to enter phase one of its re-opening on Monday, June 8. As many as 400,000 workers may return to construction sites, manufacturing sites, and retail stores with capacity and social distancing restrictions. The State will perform 35,000 tests per day in New York City to closely monitor the re-opening and will open 15 testing locations across the City dedicated to protesters.

## Presidential updates

- [President Trump Signs Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020](#), June 5
  - President Trump signed the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020 on Friday, June 5.
  - The Act provides greater flexibility to restaurants, hotels, and other small businesses to use federal loans under the Paycheck Protection Program to pay for payroll, employee benefits, and other expenses.
  - Ropes & Gray issued an [alert](#) detailing the Act's provision.
- [White House Reduces Social Distancing Precautions Among Reporters](#), June 5
  - President Trump held a press conference in the Rose Garden on Friday, June 5.
  - Seats for reporters were initially spaced six feet apart, as has typically been the arrangement for White House press conferences during the pandemic.
  - Shortly before the event, Trump aides moved the seats closer together.
  - White House Spokesman Judd Deere said that it was his decision to move the seats, stating that "it looks better" and that "those in the (press) pool are tested, everyone is temperature-checked and asked if they have had symptoms."
  - The President of the White House Correspondents' Association commented that the decision "needlessly put reporters' health at risk."

## World Health Organization (WHO)

- [WHO Revises Guidance on Mask Use During Pandemic](#), June 5
  - WHO issued [guidance](#) on mask use during the pandemic.
  - The document provides information on transmission from symptomatic, pre-symptomatic, and asymptomatic COVID-19 cases; issues practical advice on the use of medical and non-medical masks for the general public; and provides information on preferred non-medical mask features including the number and combination of layers, shape, coating, and maintenance.
  - WHO recommends that all people working in clinical areas of a health facility wear medical masks, not only clinicians working with COVID-19 patients; that those with a high risk for severe COVID-19 wear a medical mask in situations where physical distancing is not possible; and that governments should encourage the general public to wear masks in areas of widespread transmission where physical distancing is difficult.
  - WHO advises that fabric masks should consist of at least three different layers of material. WHO notes that people can potentially infect themselves if they use contaminated hands to adjust a mask, or to repeatedly take it off and put it on, without cleaning hands in between.

## U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [COVIDView Weekly Surveillance Summary of U.S. COVID-19 Activity](#), June 5
  - CDC summarized key COVID-19 disease indicators for the week ending May 30.
  - The national percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for COVID-19 decreased from the previous week; it decreased from 6.8% to 6% in public health labs and decreased from 6.5% to 5.9% in commercial labs. Percent positivity, however, increased slightly in four surveillance regions: the southeast, south central, west coast, and Pacific northwest.

- The overall cumulative hospitalization rate is 82 per 100,000, with the highest rates in people 65 years and older (254.7 per 100,000) and 50-64 years (126.2 per 100,000).
- Based on death certificate data, the percentage of total deaths attributed to pneumonia, influenza, or COVID-19 decreased from 13.7% to 8.4% from the prior week, but remained above baseline.

## **New York State**

- [\*Governor Cuomo Holds Press Conference on COVID-19\*](#), June 7
  - New York reported 45 deaths on Sunday, June 7; 31 deaths were in hospitals and 14 deaths were in nursing homes.
  - Approximately one percent of the 60,435 diagnostic tests conducted in New York on Saturday, June 6 were positive for COVID-19.
  - New York will allow outdoor, socially distanced graduations with up to 150 people, beginning on June 26.
  - Governor Cuomo expressed concern that “protests may have increased the spread of the virus.” The State will open 15 testing locations across New York City dedicated to protesters. Governor Cuomo asked protesters to “act as if [they] were exposed” and to assume that they are positive for COVID-19.
  
- [\*New York State COVID-19 Updates\*](#), June 6
  - Governor Cuomo issued an executive order allowing commercial buildings to conduct temperature checks of anyone entering the building. Cuomo stressed that the State is “finding a new normal with new behavior and new patterns in the workplace.”
  - Places of worship will be permitted to resume operations at 25% occupancy during phase two of a region’s re-opening. Places of worship in the seven regions that have already entered phase two can re-open on June 7.
  - Governor Cuomo noted that “this is an acceleration” for the State because “we are doing so well on metrics” but urged people to “stay smart” and “socially distance” during religious services.
  - New York is sending over one million masks and 25,000 gallons of hand sanitizer to assist Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) in anticipation of New York City’s re-opening.
  
- [\*Governor Cuomo Signed Legislation Panning Price Gouging\*](#), June 6
  - Governor Cuomo signed a bill into law which expands price-gouging protections to include any products or services that are vital or necessary to the health, safety, and welfare of the general public; this definition includes medical supplies such as personal protective equipment, masks, and hand sanitizer.
  - The law grants the State Attorney General the power to pursue companies that attempt to take advantage of the pandemic.

## **New York City**

- [\*New York City Health Department Publishes Sample COVID-19 Symptom Screening Tool\*](#), June 5
  - New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH) published an adaptable tool that employers can use to screen employees for COVID-19 symptoms before entering the workplace each day.
  - NYCDOH recommends that employers implement one of the following protocols: call employees each workday before they leave home to ask screening questions; issue an auto-generated email or survey that enables a response; designate a screening area and distribute screening questions on paper to employees when they arrive for work.
  - Employers are required to keep all information received during screening confidential; records should be kept separate from the employee's personnel file.
- [\*New York City Health Department Issues Guidance on How to Protest Safely During the Pandemic\*](#), June 5
  - NYCDOH issued [guidance](#) on how to protest safely during the pandemic.
  - Protesters should wear face coverings and maintain physical distance. NYCDOH recommends using noisemakers, drums, and written signs to limit chanting or yelling to reduce to spread of viral droplets. Individuals who do not feel well are encouraged to stay home and take action in other ways.
  - NYCDOH stated that protesters should assume that they have been exposed to COVID-19; protesters should avoid contact with anyone at a greater risk for severe COVID-19 and consider getting tested for COVID-19 five days after exposure.
- [\*City Opens Comprehensive Outpatient Service Centers for COVID-19 Patients\*](#), June 5
  - The City plans to open three "COVID-19 Centers of Excellence" in the fall in communities of color to provide comprehensive outpatient services for recovering COVID-19 patients. Services include pulmonary care, radiologic and diagnostic services, and mental health services to help address anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.
  - The centers will be located in Jackson Heights, Tremont, and Bushwick. In sections of Jackson Heights, approximately 37% of people tested for COVID-19 tested positive; 30% of residents in Tremont tested positive and 25% of residents in Bushwick tested positive.

## **Other Related Updates**

- [\*NIH Study Identifies Potential Approach to Treat Severe Respiratory Distress in Patients with COVID-19\*](#), June 5
  - Early data from a clinical study suggest that off-label use of the drug acalabrutinib may provide clinical benefit to patients with severe COVID-19. Acalabrutinib is approved to treat several blood cancers and operates by blocking the Bruton tyrosine kinase (BTK) protein.
  - Acalabrutinib was associated with reduced respiratory distress and a reduction in the overactive immune response in most of the 16 patients treated in the study.

- The study was led by Center for Cancer Research at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), in collaboration with researchers from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).
- [\*HHS Publishes List of Initiatives Designed to Address the Disparate Impact of COVID-19 on Racial and Ethnic Minorities\*](#), June 5
  - Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published a list of federal initiatives designed to address the disparate impact of COVID-19 on African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities.
  - The initiatives include strengthening data collection and research on the impact of COVID-19; making virus testing and treatments more accessible and affordable; expanding telehealth options to increase access to care; and strengthening outreach to minority communities.
- [\*CBP Continues to Seize Large Number of Counterfeit and Unapproved COVID-19 Products\*](#), June 5
  - Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued a press release detailing the identification and seizure of a large number of counterfeit, unapproved, or otherwise substandard COVID-19 products at U.S. borders.
  - As of June 1, CBP has seized more than 107,300 FDA-prohibited COVID-19 test kits in 301 incidents; 750,000 counterfeit face masks in 86 incidents; 2,500 EPA-prohibited anti-virus lanyards in 89 incidents; and 11,000 FDA-prohibited chloroquine tablets in 91 incidents.
  - CBP stated that it “continues to target these dangerous shipments while facilitating the entry of legitimate pharmaceuticals and medical supplies that are needed to protect Americans.”
- [\*FDA COVID-19 Update: Daily Roundup\*](#), June 5
  - FDA issued an enforcement [policy](#) to expand the availability of non-invasive monitoring devices to facilitate remote patient care.
  - FDA expanded the hours of the COVID-19 Industry [Hotline](#) to answer questions on diagnostic tests, ventilators, and personal protective equipment.
  - FDA published a [summary](#) of facts, figures, and highlights of the agency’s pandemic response.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [\*Data Privacy Concerns for Latin American Businesses During COVID-19\*](#), June 4
- [\*Congress Passes Amendment to Paycheck Protection Program\*](#), June 4
- [\*Global Health Care Compliance Initiative: Managing Compliance Issues and Process Changes Related to COVID-19\*](#), June 4

Send questions to:

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